


# MONROE ELECTRIC NEWS

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Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Alan W. Wattles

## Across The President's Desk

## Save money with your new Co-op Connections Discount Card!

Monroe County Electric Cooperative (MCEC), in conjunction with the other Touchstone Energy cooperatives serving 17 million member-owners nationwide, has **relaunched** the **Co-op Connections Card Program**.

This new card-based member benefit program is designed to deliver added value to our members – residential and business – by offering valuable discounts at participating local and national businesses.

The original launch of the Connections Card happened in 2008. Some members may have misplaced their cards since then, so we are sending all our members a new card with an information sheet.

Whenever a Co-op Connections cardholder – whether from Monroe County Electric Cooperative or from one of the hundreds of Touchstone Energy cooperatives across the country – shows the Co-op Connections card

at a participating business, they receive a discount. Equally, those businesses benefit from increased customer visits by cooperative members participating in the program.

It is easy to spot which local businesses are participating. Look for the Co-op Connections sticker in their windows, or simply log on to [connections.coop](http://connections.coop) to view a complete list of participants by state or by cooperative.

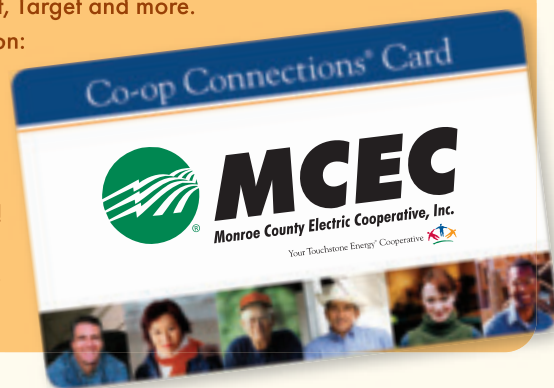
### Prescription Drug Benefits

MCEC members can now save 10 – 85 percent on most prescriptions at more than 60,000 independent pharmacies and national chains, including CVS, Walgreens, Wal-Mart, Target and more.

You can search online to find the discounted price of your prescription: [rxpricequotes.com](http://rxpricequotes.com) and click on “Drug Pricing Lookup” to find your prescription discount.

Participating locations: Log into [Healthysavings.coop](http://Healthysavings.coop) and enter the information requested (member and group number are located on the back of your Co-op Connections Card) and find pharmacies near you!

For “Frequently Asked Questions,” go to the Connections Card website at [connections.coop](http://connections.coop) and click on the box that says “Pharmacy Discounts” on the right side.



## Holiday Closings

**Our office will be closed**  
**Christmas, Dec. 25**  
**New Year's Day, Jan. 1**

## Solar comes to cooperative office



Recently, your cooperative hired Ag Industries, Inc. to install a solar panel array at our office headquarters.

The 10 KW array was installed to provide us information on what a solar panel system actually produces over the course of a year. We plan to pass this information on to our

membership through our website at [mcec.org](http://mcec.org).

With all that's been happening in the solar industry, we have had quite a few questions from members, who have or are considering the installation of these systems for their homes or businesses.

Your cooperative wants to be a key information resource for the members to help them decide if solar is something they want to get involved with.

## MCEC helps Maey's Creek Pumping District secure zero-interest REDLG loan for improvements

The Maey's Creek Pumping District recently received a check for a \$103,000 zero-interest loan thanks to assistance from Monroe County Electric Cooperative (MCEC) and the USDA Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program (REDLG).

This loan will help finance soft start equipment for the pumping district's three 900 horsepower pump motors. These devices will help reduce the high electric demand that the motors generate when first turned on. This reduction in demand should save the district significant power cost dollars from MCEC, their electrical supplier. MCEC is itself billed on these demand costs from its electric supplier, Southern Illinois Power Cooperative (SIPC) out of Marion, Ill.

These high-powered pumps help keep seep water out from the bottoms area and moves it to the river side of the levee. Each 900 hp pump can move up to 90,000 gallons per minute.

The REDLG loan starts out as a grant to the cooperative which can then be loaned out to rural non-profits and businesses that it serves. This

revolving loan fund is available for qualifying projects that will promote rural economic development or aid rural non-profit organizations.

"Investing in the rural communities Monroe County Electric Cooperative serves is at the core of why electric cooperatives were formed some 80 years ago," said President/CEO Alan Wattles. "This continues to be a cornerstone of the rural cooperative movement, whether through direct resource allocation or through opportunities to partner as in the case with the USDA Rural Economic Development program (REDLG).

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand



*Front left to right: Maey's Creek Pumping District representatives, Doug Sondag, Brian Edler and Gene Rohlfing. Back left to right: MCEC board members, Gary Gregson and Ross Mueller; MCEC President/CEO Alan Wattles.*

economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. The funding for these projects is part of the REDLG program to support local rural businesses and non-profit organizations like the pumping district. For more information about this program, visit [rd.usda.gov](http://rd.usda.gov).

# Four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop



The holiday season is finally upon us, and Santa and his elves have been especially busy as they gear up for their biggest night of the year.

It's no secret that Santa is known for running an efficient workshop – how else could he make all those toys in time for Christmas Eve? Rumor has it that one way Santa ensures an efficient workspace is through energy-saving measures.

Here are four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop.



Santa leaves his decorations up year-round, so by using LED holiday light strands, he's able to save on his monthly energy bills. LED holiday strands can last up to 40 seasons, which make them a great option for any festive home.



Santa requires several power tools to make a year's worth of new toys. That's why he insists on using cordless power tools with the ENERGY STAR rating. According to energystar.gov, if all power tools in the U.S. used ENERGY STAR-rated battery chargers, 2 billion



kWh hours of electricity could be saved – that's equivalent to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 1.7 million tons!

Mrs. Claus loves to keep warm by the fire in the evenings, and Santa knows one of the best tricks to ensure fireplace efficiency. While a fireplace can keep a small area of your home cozy and warm, it can also pull heated air from the room through the chimney. That's why Santa always closes the fireplace flue when a fire isn't burning.



Santa also saves energy by using power strips. Power strips are ideal for workshops, craft nooks, game rooms and other spaces in your home. With one simple switch, you can conveniently control several devices and electronics that are plugged into the power strip.

This holiday season, let's take a page from Santa's book and remember to save energy when possible. With these four tips, you'll be well on your way to savings and Santa's "nice" list!

## MCEC line outages - October 2020

Date	Duration	# Out	Map Location	Cause Desc	Substation
10/14/2020	0:31	9	Stemler Rd	Small Animals Or Birds	Millstadt
10/17/2020	1:25	2	Autumn Ct	Trees, Other	Millstadt
10/20/2020	1:48	61	Wirth/Saeger Rd	Trees, Other	Millstadt
10/21/2020	0:57	475	Red Bud East	Maintenance	Poe
10/21/2020	0:57	530	Waterloo South	Maintenance	Waterloo
10/21/2020	0:54	262	Red Bud West	Maintenance	Poe
10/22/2020	1:35	12	Il Rt 159	Trees, Other	Poe
10/24/2020	1:15	29	Covered Bridge Dr	Trees, Other	Waterloo
10/25/2020	1:21	13	Apple Blossom Ln	Small Animals Or Birds	East Carondelet
10/26/2020	2:07	475	Waterloo East	Other, Faulty Equipment	Poe
10/26/2020	1:36	530	Waterloo South	Other, Faulty Equipment	Waterloo
10/28/2020	0:19	69	Fults	Maintenance	Fults
10/31/2020	2:17	19	Lake Lucille Subdivision	Other, Deterioration	North Waterloo



## Be a Smart Cookie Holiday Baking Tips

If you're planning to cook feasts or create treats this holiday season, follow these basic safety tips:

### Test Smoke Detectors

Make sure they're working properly



### Watch Your Sleeves

This is not a good time for loose sleeves

### Put a Lid on it

Have lids handy in case of a grease fire



### Old Things Don't Become New

Don't use appliances in disrepair

### How the Cookie Crumbles

Consider having a fire extinguisher on hand



### Where There's Heat There Could Be Fire

Keep flammables such as pot holders away from the stove

### Not Child's Play

Keep children and pets away from cooking areas



### Keeping Time

Use a timer when the oven or stove is on

### Stay With it

Don't leave the room if you are broiling, frying or simmering food



### Pay Attention

Take a nap after the feast

Safe  
Electricity.org

## IEC Memorial Scholarship reminder

Twelve \$2,000 scholarships will be awarded in 2021 through the Thomas H. Moore IEC Memorial Scholarship Program.



scholarships awarded to high school seniors who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members.



scholarships for high school seniors enrolling full time at a two-year Illinois community college who are the sons or daughters of Illinois electric cooperative members, employees or directors.



Earl W. Struck Memorial Scholarship awarded to a high school senior who is the son or daughter of an Illinois electric co-op employee or director.



LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship awarded to a student attending lineworker school conducted by the Association of Illinois Electric Cooperatives in conjunction with Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield, Ill.

Deadline to apply is Dec. 31, 2020. The lineworker scholarship deadline is April 30, 2021. For more information, go to [aiec.coop/iec-scholarship](http://aiec.coop/iec-scholarship).

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Energy bills can increase during winter for a variety of reasons, like houseguests, more time spent at home, and shorter days and longer nights. Small actions, like turning down your thermostat, replacing old bulbs with LEDs and washing clothes in cold water can help you save.



[www.mcec.org](http://www.mcec.org)

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